

MILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING 1/2/15

Commissioners present: Cynthia Wyatt, Steve Panish, Charlie Karcher, Barbara Berry
Also present: Liz Dionne, Town Administrator and the following members of the public:
Les Elder, Eric Knapp, George Knapp, Kari Lygren, Janice Long, Tim Long. As the meeting was ending, Mike Beaulieu and Andy Rawson joined.

Tom Gray was unable to attend due to illness.

Minutes hereby recorded by Barb Berry

ATTACHMENTS: Town Forest letter - S. Panish

Warrant Article Advisory Statements (2) - B Berry, Steve Panish

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Cynthia Wyatt at 4 pm.

1. Cynthia first asked for public comment. No comments were offered.
2. The review and approval of the December 8th minutes was tabled as there has been little time to look at them, given that today's meeting had not been planned long in advance. Cynthia made the motion to table, Barb Berry seconded, and all three agreed.
3. Treasurer Steve Panish reported on the status of the 50K owed to the Conservation Fund by the town. He then offered some background on the funds removal for our general understanding.
Discussion ensued. Cynthia asked if it could be a line item in the budget for a refund, to which Liz Dionne responded that it could not be resolved in that way. The question was also raised about the possibility of having the town issue a promissory note. Liz stated that the Selectmen are aware of their responsibility and further action would be based on funds availability, which will be known when the books close the third week in January, at which time the Selectmen anticipate making a payment. There was a question concerning any payments already made. Cynthia was going to check previous records as to a date and amount of any past payment from the original amount due. Cynthia asserted the Conservation Commission's understanding of the town's fiscal issues and willingness to work with a number of possible scenarios for a repayment schedule, while also noting her hopes that this will be resolved in a timely manner.
4. There was much discussion on the option to "purchase Town Forest" property as a sort of "trade" for monies owed the Conservation Fund. It was stated by Treasurer Steve Panish that a dangerous precedent had occurred in a similar previous situation, which the Conservation Commission strongly wishes to avoid in future. (Please see Steve Panish's attached letter for further reference.)
5. The Conservation Commission discussed two draft advisory statements to present at the Planning Board Public Hearing on January 6 regarding the petition warrant article to change

Milton's zoning to permit Solid Waste Management Facilities and Recycling Facilities in all zoning districts of Milton. Cynthia Wyatt read the draft statement prepared by Steve Panish, followed by the draft statement prepared by Barb Berry. Discussion ensued during which the pros and cons of each statement were reviewed by both Commission members and members of the public. It was decided that both statements would be presented, as each statement offered a valid reflection of both the immediate and long-term negative ramifications stemming from the petition warrant article as well as how far it falls from the stated principles, policy goals and vision of the town's Master Plan, ordinances and state RSA sound planning directives. (Please see each statement attached.) Discussion also ensued concerning public awareness of the Master Plan update process, with several audience members suggesting attendance at Planning Board meetings to directly inquire about its progress and any citizen participation aspect, such as public forums.

6. Barb Berry asked if the CC might move to a later meeting time, so she would be able to make the meetings in a timely manner. With discussion, it was decided to move the meeting day to Tuesdays. Cynthia will check on room availability at that time. The Commission also agreed to postpone its meeting slated for Monday, January 12. It will meet on Tuesday, January 13 as a workshop meeting, in order to work on updates to the natural resources inventory section of the Master Plan.

7. Barbara Berry made a motion to adjourn, Charlie Karcher seconded, and the motion carried.